



Redeem Marriage

November 11-12

Friday, November 11

7:00 pm

Worship

Session 1

Refreshments

Saturday, November 12

9:00-11:30 am

Continental Breakfast

Session 2 & 3

11:30-12:30 pm

Lunch Break

12:30-2:30 pm

Session 4a

Session 4b

Contents

Session 1—Marriage as Worship	3
“Next Steps” For Home & Community	6-7
Session 2—Nine Common Mistakes in Conflict, Part 1	8-13
Session 3— Nine Common Mistakes in Conflict, Part 2	14-19
Lunch—“Couple Time” <i>Spend additional time discussing the truths and the heart-to-heart question covered in Sessions 1-3.</i>	
Session 4A—Dealing with the Challenges in the Marriage Bed <i>husbands & wives meet separately</i>	20
Session 4B—Enjoying Oneness in the Marriage Bed <i>husbands & wives meet together</i>	21
Guidelines for Heart Talk	22

Session 1—Marriage as Worship

Rhythms in Marriage

The rhythms of the gospel in our *weekly* worship can shape our *daily* marriage. What are the rhythms of the gospel that we experience every Sunday in our gathered worship?

Adoration
Confession
Assurance of Pardon
Passing of Peace
Receiving & Responding to God's Word
Communion
Benediction

CALL TO WORSHIP (ADORATION)

Sing a new song to the Lord!
Let the whole earth sing to the Lord!
Sing to the Lord; praise his name.
Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.
Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.
Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise!
-Psalm 96:1-4

Adoring God as a Couple

1. Continue to worship God through prayer, praising God for who he is and all that he does through Christ.
2. Share what God is stirring in your heart and mind as you worship him.

CONFESSION

God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.—1 John 4:17--21

Confessing to God & to One Another

1. As a couple, or individually, take a moment through prayer to confess whatever sins God brings to mind.
2. Confess any particular ways you have sinned against one another, remembering to focus on your own sinful attitudes or actions, not focusing on those of your spouse.
3. Offer forgiveness by faith as your spouse asks for your forgiveness for any particular sins. If you are not able to forgive in this moment, be prayerful as you continue to worship God, and as you prepare for communion.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.
—Romans 8:38-39*

Assurance from God & from One Another

1. In response to what YOU confessed, pray for how you long to hear and experience God's assurance of his love, his forgiveness, his presence, his delight in you, etc.
2. In response to what YOUR SPOUSE confessed, assure your spouse, through the power of the Spirit, in two ways: (1) with God's promises and (2) with your own words of love, forgiveness, encouragement and commitment.

PEACE

Peace from God and to One Another

1. Offer peace first to one another as husband and wife
2. Offer peace to those around you

Sermon Passage

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. / And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

—Ephesians 3:14-21

1. Remember Love (Eph. 3:14-15)

2. Pray for Power (Eph. 3:16-17a)

3. Pray for Love (Eph. 3:17b-19)

4. Trust Love (Eph. 3:20-21)

COMMUNION

So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. —1 Corinthians 11:27-29

Examine your heart before taking communion, especially if you are unwilling to forgive your spouse as Christ has forgiven you. Eph. 4:31-32

BENEDICTION (A Blessing for the Road)

1. Take a moment through prayer to bless your spouse and commission him/her for their life with God as he/she participates in God's mission. One suggestion—look at your spouse as you pray a blessing over your spouse, even raising your hands over him/her or placing your hand on his/her shoulder.
2. After you bless one another, pray for other specific couples within Sojourn asking God to increase their worship in their marriage.

“NEXT STEPS” FOR HOME & COMMUNITY

“One Flesh” Worship (One with Jesus, One with Spouse)

Adoration

1. Share with your spouse how you worship and adore God throughout the week. You will both be blessed as you get into the habit of sharing glimpses of your personal worship with one another.
2. In light of Romans 12:1, reflect and share how you can adore God in the midst of laundry, dishes, grocery, work, shopping, changing diapers, meals, and bath time (knowing that most of these time, you will not have your Bible in front of you).
3. How can you create more space and rest so that you can grow in adoring God together as a couple? Start with your Sunday routine at home. Also consider how you can make more space to adore God in your daily, weekly, monthly, annual rhythms.

Confession

1. How can you more regularly move from adoration to confession in your walk with God, not just during a “quiet time,” but throughout the day?
2. What will it look like to confess regularly to one another, not in a legalistic way, but in a way that reflects God's rhythm of grace, resulting in life and love?

Assurance of Pardon—Peace

1. Share how you can grow in assuring one another of (1) God's forgiving love and (2) your forgiving love through the power of God's Spirit.
2. Get into the life-giving rhythm of confessing and forgiving sin with the purpose of reconciliation, which will lead to a growing oneness with God and with one another.

Receiving & Responding to God's Word

1. First, share how each of you can grow in receiving and responding to God's word, to include a community who will help keep you accountable to this essential gospel rhythm. Besides your spouse, list the names of 2-3 people who will partner with you in accountability.
2. Second, brainstorm how you can grow in receiving and responding to God's word together as a couple. The Sunday gathered service is a great first step. Think of another opportunity that you can experience together during the week.
3. As you read God's word, or review the sermon, ask three questions: (1) What does God say? (2) What does God teach—about himself, his relationship with us, myself? (3) What should I obey?

Communion

1. Prepare your hearts on Saturday before attending Sunday worship by confessing to God and to one another, receiving forgiveness from God and extending forgiveness to one another through the power of his Spirit.
2. Communion reminds us of the sacrifice Christ made to bring us into communion with God. Our intimate communion with God informs our intimate communion with one another as husband and wife. Share how you can prayerfully grow in sexual feasting and sexual fasting (1 Cor. 7:3-6) so that you might know and enjoy God more fully.

Blessings for the Road

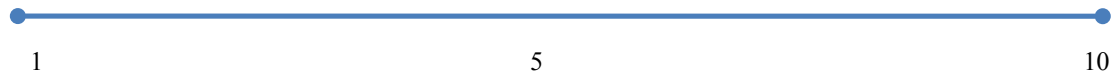
1. Consider ways you can bless one another before you leave for work. If you leave before everyone is awake, you can stand in the hallway and pray for each family member outside his/her door.
2. Share if you may need a mid-day blessing so you can remind one another of your life with God while participating in his mission. Keep it simple and brief, whether it be through a brief phone call, text or email.

“Scattered” Worship (With other couples as the body of Christ)

1. How can your weekly small group gatherings grow in gathered worship as you think about the rhythms of the gospel: adoration—confession—assurance—receiving & responding to God's word—communion—blessing/commissioning? Ask your CG leaders if you can discuss as a group how you can grow in the rhythms of worship.
2. How can you grow in personally spurring other married couples to “love and good deeds” (Heb. 10:24-25)? Whether it be in your CG, or other circles of friendships, pray for God to help you identify 1 couple that you can encourage this next month.

Session 2 - Nine Common Mistakes in Conflict

Exercise--Rate your marriage on scale of 1-10 (1 = divorce; 10 = perfect marriage)



Mistake #1--Not Aware

- Not Looking

- Not Listening

Distracted

Selective listening

Listening only to the words

- **Correction**--Look & listen with your eyes, ears & heart

- **Correction**

Listen to Heart Struggles (thoughts--emotions—desires)

Listen for Common Struggles (fears, shame & guilt, sorrow, anger, fantasy)

Listen for Relational Struggles (Spouse--Self--God)

Mistake #2—Assume

- **Assume**--thinking something is true without proof.

Fools have no interest in understanding; they only want to air their own opinions. Proverbs 18:2

- **Assumptions** can flow from ...

How you interpret the same words, actions

Your Tendencies

What's in your heart

- **Correction**--Ask questions to understand ... to clarify.

Understand—"Can you tell me more?"

Clarify—"What do you mean by that?"

Follow the String

Mistake #3--Accuse

- *Assumptions* leads to accusations ...

Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut. Proverbs 10:19

Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish. Proverbs 18:13

- When you accuse, you take a *position* and you *point* fingers...

- *Positional Warfare*

- *Correction*

Share your perspective—"It seems that you are angry with me."

Ask more questions—to understand & clarify

Mistake #4-- Get Angry

“Anger is an assessment you make and a stance you take—‘That matters... and it’s wrong’”
—David Powlison, *Good and Angry*, 40).

And take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. James 4:4-6

- **Correction**

Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper—it only leads to harm Psalm 37:8

Zip it

Step Away

Cool Down

Pray

Mistake #5--Attack

- **5 Hurtful Reactions**

It is foolish to belittle one's neighbor; a sensible person keeps quiet. Proverbs 11:12

Criticism

Defensiveness

Contempt

Belligerence

Stonewalling

Your kindness will reward you, but your cruelty will destroy you. Proverbs 11:17

For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. Galatians 5:14-15

When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures ... hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness ... and other sins like these. Galatians 5:19-21

Fighting **AGAINST** One Another = Destruction

Fighting **FOR** One Another = Ministry

- **Correction**--Respond in the Spirit, not the flesh

Stop

Pray

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. James 4:7-8a

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

Mistake #6. Avoid or Repeat

- *Avoid* talking--sweep under the rug

Hard Work

Fear

- *Repeat*--argue about the same old things

List some issues that keep surfacing ...

- *Correction*

Address (instead of avoid). The truth is always your friend

Follow the Spiral --(instead of repeat). Understand the deeper issues.

Mistake #7--Forget God

- *Not aware* of God
- *Wrong assumptions* about God
- *Accuse God*
- *Angry at God*
- *Avoid God*

- **Correction:**

For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding... Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair and you will find the right way to go. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe. Proverbs 2:6; 9-11

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6

Look for God's realities ... God's presence, promises & power

Listen for God's invitation ... God is always inviting & pursuing us (Matt. 11:28-30; Ps. 23:6)

Live by faith in God's realities, not by the fear, anger or hopelessness in your reality

Draw near to God through his word and prayer by his Spirit

- 2 Cor. 1:1-7—pray to the Father of compassion and the God of comfort
- *Eph.* 3:14-21—pray for love
- *Phil.* 4:1-9—pray for peace in disunity, pray to the God of peace

Mistake #8—Apologize

- *Apology*: “I’m sorry . . .”

- *Correction*:

Confess “SHUSH” = Confession Guideline (based on James 4:7-10)

S = Submit to God & See Your Sin (Jas. 4:7-8a)

H = Hurt (Jas. 4:1-5)--share how your sins have hurt your spouse & others.

Intent & Impact¹—God cares about both

- Intent—“It wasn’t my intentions . . . I didn’t mean to ignore you.”
- Impact—“Even though I did not intend to ignore you, I realize that I hurt you.”
- We want others to judge our intentions but we judge others by their impact.

“If” erases any confession—“If I hurt you . . .”

- Instead you can say, “At any point I have hurt you . . .”
- “When I have hurt you . . .”

U = Understand (Jas. 4:1-5)--ask your spouse to help you understand more deeply (1) the wrong you committed & the hurt you caused, (2) the consequences of your sins, and (3) ways you can help to restore the relationship.

S = Sorrow & Stop & Change (Jas. 4:8b-9)--share how you will stop & change and how will you commit to live differently?

(Past) “If I can go back and deal with things differently, I would . . .”

(Future)² “In the future, I will . . .”

H = Humble (Jas. 4:10)--ask for forgiveness (acknowledges the sin and asks for mercy)

Not Asking for Forgiveness & Not Forgiving

¹ Distinction between Intent & Impact from Judy Dabler, Creative Conciliation.

² Concrete ways to express change for the past & present from Judy Dabler, Creative Conciliation.

Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs. Proverbs 10:12

- **Forgiveness does not ...**

Deny, excuse, accept or allow the offense

Eliminate the consequences

Forget the memories

Imply reconciliation

- **Forgiveness**

What's the main difference between an *Apology & Forgiveness*?

An apology most often is a statement

Asking for forgiveness involves a question ... asking for mercy

God commands us to do for others what he has done for us:

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
—Ephesians 4:30-32

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
—Ephesians 5:1-2

Ask for forgiveness--“I am sorry for ____, I know I hurt you deeply, will you forgive me (will you love me despite my sins against you)?”

Forgive--“Yes, I forgive you (I commit to loving you despite your sins against me).”

Mistake #9--Not Share, Celebrate & Give Thanks

Not sharing

Not celebrating

Not Giving God Thanks

- ***Correction:***

Share what is going on--what you are thinking, learning, how you are growing

Celebrate good times, bring attention to the sweet moments

Give God thanks--knowing that every good gift comes from him (Jas. 1:17)

Heart Talk Questions:

Number the 9 Common Mistakes in the following order:

1 = my worse; 3 = pretty bad; 5 = my tendency; 7 = sometimes good; 10 = my best

Not Aware

Avoid or Repeat

Assume

Forget God

Accuse

Apologize

Get Angry

Don't Ask for Forgiveness
Don't Forgive

Attack

List your top 3 mistakes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Steps (Take notes so you won't forget the key things your spouse shares with you.)

- Take time to pray and ask God to show you how you have sinned **against Him** and **against your spouse** through these mistakes.
- Ask your spouse how these mistakes have **impacted** him/her.

- Ask questions to understand your spouse's heart & hurt (follow the string) and to clarify what he/she is saying.

- Express **sorrow** for how you hurt your spouse.

- Look at the “**correction**” steps associated with each mistake. Write down your “next steps” then share how you will **stop** making the specific mistake and **change** your ways.

Next Steps:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- ***Ask for forgiveness*** by faith in Christ
- ***Forgive*** by faith in the power of God’s Spirit.
- ***Share*** how God is stirring your heart and soul and how you see God at work in your spouse.
- ***Celebrate*** the good that you experienced during your conversation.
- ***Give thanks.***
- ***Make a plan*** for how you can be more intentional to share—celebrate—give thanks throughout the day, week, etc.

Session 4A—Dealing with the Challenges of the Marriage Bed

What You Think about “Romance” ...

- Romance = _____ . The goal of sex = _____ .
- Study of 2000 Christian happily married women

Differences in Sexual Desires

- “Creation”
- “Fall”
- God’s Purpose & Our Growth

Natural Cycle of Abstinence

- Monthly Cycle
- Stress—Schedule—Sickness—Strife--Surroundings
- Pregnancy & Delivery
- Newborn—Toddler--Teen

Communication In & Out of the Marriage Bed

- Fantasy or Nightmare
- Pain, Shame, Bitterness (past or present)

What Keeps the Marriage Bed from Being Boring?

- Love
- Change

Session 4B—Enjoying Oneness in the Marriage Bed

Quiz Time

A Way for Oneness

God designed marital sexual union as a means of making two become one by . . .

- Bringing a couple face to face
- Enabling the husband and wife to enjoy a gift from God designed to lead to deeper intimacy
- Showing it's not all about individual feelings, but it is a means of serving the other

Be Your Wife's Eyes (body image)

Enjoying the Marriage Bed

Protecting the Marriage Bed

Ultimate Pleasure & Satisfaction

- God designed the marital sexual union as a means of drawing closer to Christ . . .
- The blessing cultivates gratitude to God
- The love shared points to perfect love
- The pleasures and joy experienced is incomparable to what is yet to come . . .

*In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.
—Psalm 16:11*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
—Matthew 5:6*

Guidelines for Heart Talk

1. Find a quiet place to sit and share.
2. Remember that your spouse is God's gift to you.
3. Draw near to one another and listen to your spouse's heart. Also listen for evidence of God's Spirit at work in your spouse's life and in your marriage.
4. Draw out each other's heart. Pay particular attention to life story themes and relational struggles—with God, self & others.
5. Share only about yourself. Confess any sins against God and your spouse the Lord has revealed to you.
6. Draw near to God together. As needed, ask each other for forgiveness and forgive one another through the power of the cross. Encourage one another in Christ.
7. See your lives and marriage as a journey, where God is redeeming each of you as you take steps of faith, trusting and obeying God.
8. Pray and thank God for his faithfulness and love.